

What is claimed is:

1. A scanning optical system, comprising:

a light source that emits a light beam;

a polygon mirror arranged to rotate about a rotation axis and having a reflection surface parallel to said rotation axis, said reflection surface deflecting said light beam so as to scan said light beam on an object surface;

an image forming optical system disposed between said polygon mirror and the object surface to converge the light beam deflected by said reflection surface on the object surface; and

a light shielding member disposed between said polygon mirror and said image forming optical system, said light shielding member blocking a ghost light reflected by another reflection surface of the polygon mirror located adjacent to the reflection surface deflecting the light beam, said ghost light being generated by said image forming optical system partially reflecting said light beam toward the polygon mirror.

2. The scanning optical system according to claim 1, wherein said light shielding member is an opaque plate.

3. The scanning optical system according to claim 2, wherein said opaque plate is disposed perpendicular to an optical axis of said image forming optical system.

4. The scanning optical system according to claim 2, wherein said light beam is scanned on the object surface in a main scanning direction, and

wherein said opaque plate is disposed in parallel to said main scanning direction.

5. The scanning optical system according to claim 1, wherein said light shielding member is disposed out of a beam scanning area within which said light beam is to be scanned by said polygon mirror.

6. The scanning optical system according to claim 5, wherein said light shielding member is disposed such that one end thereof is located within an area surrounded by said reflection surface deflecting said light beam, said beam scanning area, and an area within which said ghost image reflected by said another reflection surface is to be scanned.

7. The scanning optical system according to claim 1, comprising a plurality of said light sources arranged to

emit a plurality of said light beams toward a substantially single point defined in a vicinity of said reflection surface of said polygon mirror, said plurality of light beams being distributed symmetrically with respect to a main scanning plane, said main scanning plane passing through said single point and being perpendicular to said rotation axis of said polygon mirror,

wherein said image forming optical system is arranged to converge said plurality of light beams deflected by said polygon mirror on different photoconductive drums.